

**Eastfork Fishtrap Creek Bridge Project
Environmental Assessment Decision Notice**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region Three, Bozeman
October 18, 2010**

Proposed Action

1. Type of proposed state action: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing to remove an undersized culvert and install a free span 24 ft x 14 ft bridge using pressure treated wood stringers, concrete wing walls and surfaced with 14 ft wood planks on the Eastfork of Fishtrap Creek—a tributary to the Big Hole River. The intent of this project is to improve fish passage for Arctic grayling and other native and sport fish species, improve sediment transport and floodplain function.

The project site is located on property owned by John Driggers (T2N, R13W, Section 19). The Project is located approximately 20 miles north of the community of Wisdom in Deerlodge County.

Montana Environmental Policy Act

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on September 24, 2010.

Public comments on the proposed action were taken for 22 days (through October 15, 2010). The EA was mailed to 26 individuals and groups, and legal notices were printed in the *Montana Standard* (Butte, MT) and the *Dillon Tribune*. The EA was also posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/>.

Summary of Public Comment

One comment was received during the 22-day review period. The comment received was from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) which reviewed the Environmental Assessment to determine if this project warranted an inventory for cultural resources. SHPO determined that an inventory was not warranted, but requested that if any cultural material be inadvertently discovered during the project that their office be contacted.

MFWP Response

MFWP will notify SHPO if any cultural material is discovered during project construction.

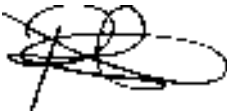
Final Environmental Assessment

There are no modifications necessary to the Draft Environmental Assessment based on public comment. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

Decision

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and the need to preserve fluvial Arctic grayling and its habitat in Fishtrap Creek and the Big Hole River, it is my decision to proceed with the Eastfork Fishtrap Creek Bridge Project that will enhance fish passage and provide the infrastructure to improve channel function on Fishtrap Creek, a tributary to the Big Hole River.

I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.



Patrick J. Flowers
Region Three Supervisor